

# Justice and Community Safety Directorate

## Things To Know - Offenders

*Updated: Wed, 03 Oct 2012 14:15:22 +1000*

*Printed: Wed, 22 May 2019 01:53:15 +1000*

*Revision: 4*

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There are some things you should think about if you are going to participate in restorative justice (RJ):

- You don't have to do it if you don't want to;
- You don't have to meet the victim face-to-face if you don't want to;
- You can talk to a lawyer at any time about doing RJ and about any agreement that comes out of a conference;
- You can pull out of RJ at any time, up to and including a conference;
- If you say you were there when the incident happened, you did it and you know it was wrong, this doesn't stop you from going to court and telling the court you are not guilty;
- You can be referred to RJ at any time in the criminal justice system:
  - instead of going to court;
  - as well as going to court; or
  - once the court has sentenced you.
- If you go to court for sentencing after you have participated in RJ, the court may consider whether you have accepted responsibility for the offence. This means that a court can reduce your sentence because you have participated in RJ but it is not required to reduce the sentence;
- If you decide not to take part in RJ, or you pull out once the process has started, the court must not consider this when sentencing.